

Hawaiian Missionaries in the Marquesas

Nancy J. Morris

Deposited in file drawers at the Hawaiian Mission Children's Society library is a collection of letters which document a half century of the self-sacrificing, lonely and cruelly unyielding mission to the Marquesas Islands. These are the letters, largely in the Hawaiian language, written by Hawaiian missionaries to their *haole* mentors and friends on the Hawaiian Board in Honolulu. Albertine Loomis has given a detailed and compassionate account of the mission in her *To All People*¹ which it is not necessary here to repeat, but the characters of the missionaries, their reactions to their self-chosen exile and to the many obstacles encountered inspire the continued interest of researchers. Emphasis in these pages has been on the Hawaiian perception of the mission rather than on the view from Honolulu. The missionaries' own words supply the most accurate measures of the men; this has been the justification for the inclusion of the quotations from the Hawaiian.²

Of all the missionary families sent to the Marquesas, the James Kekelas, the Samuel Kauwealohas, and the Zachariah Hapukus served the longest in those far-off islands, Kekela from 1853-1899, Kauwealoha from 1853 until his death in the mission field in 1909, and Zachariah Hapuku from 1861 until his death in the Marquesas in 1901. James Kekela is the most famous, his career dramatized by the often repeated gold watch incident. In 1864 Kekela rescued an American seaman from threatened death at the hands of a group of angry Marquesans. In gratitude, Abraham Lincoln wrote an appreciative letter and arranged that Kekela be sent an inscribed gold watch. The watch itself now belongs to the Hawaiian Mission House Library and Kekela descendants like to bring their children there to see the watch, kept locked in a vault. It is perhaps unfortunate that Kekela's name is always linked to the Abraham Lincoln incident because it overshadows the full story of Kekela's long years of service in an isolated mission station.

Kauwealoha's name is known to many readers by virtue of his meeting with

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Robert Louis Stevenson, recorded in Stevenson's *In the South Seas*. Kauwealoha entertained Stevenson with the famous rescue tale, and Stevenson published the account couched in Kauwealoha's picturesque "Kanaka English":

... I got 'Melican mate," the chief he say. "What you do to 'Melican mate?" Kekela he say. "I go make fire, I go kill, I go eat him," he say; "You come to-morrow eat piece." "I no want eat 'Melican mate!" Kekela he say; "Why you want?" "This bad shippee this slave shippee," the chief he say, "one time a shippee he come from Pelu, he take away plenty Kanaka, he take away my son. 'Melican mate he bad man. I go eat him; you eat piece." "I no want eat 'Melican mate!" Kekela he say; and he cly—all night he cly! ...³

Stevenson apologized for the account, realizing it was unjust to repeat the stumblings of a foreigner in a language only partly acquired. Indeed the passage does misrepresent Kauwealoha. Primitive his English might have been, but the man was not primitive, nor was his expression of his thoughts in his native language; Kauwealoha's Hawaiian is dignified, eloquent and often poetic.

Hapuku's name is little known though his years of service equalled in number those of Kauwealoha and Kekela. It may be that missionary officials have been content with Hapuku's obscurity because of his suspension for several years from the ministry on charges of collusion with witchcraft. Perhaps the time has come to honor Hapuku as a fellow-worker with Kekela and Kauwealoha. His sin, if that it was, was that he attempted loyalties to two conflicting cultures.

The Hawaii-based mission to the Marquesas was preceded by earlier missionary efforts made by the London Missionary Society. In 1797 the British missionary, Pascoe Crook, arrived in the Marquesas, but stayed only one year. David Darling, also of the London Missionary Society, in 1831 attempted another mission, importing Tahitian assistants, but this effort was abandoned as a failure.⁴

Encouraged by a favorable report made by a reconnaissance team, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions urged the Hawaiian mission to send workers to the Marquesas, and in 1833 the William Alexanders, the Richard Armstrongs, and the Benjamin Parkers established a mission on the island of Nukuhiva. But this group too gave up in less than a year. Their reasons for leaving were the indifference and hostility of the Marquesans, the difficulties in traveling from place to place, the lack of suitable locales for mission stations, and their discouragement in finding that at best they could hope to reach only a small number of converts. They estimated that of the 7,000 Marquesans then populating the islands, only a thousand or so could possibly be influenced, and concluded that work in Hawaii would be more productive.⁵

The story of how the native Hawaiian missionaries were called to the Marquesas begins with a tribal war. Samuel Kauwealoha in 1891 wrote to O. P. Emerson, secretary of the Hawaiian Board, recalling the inception of the

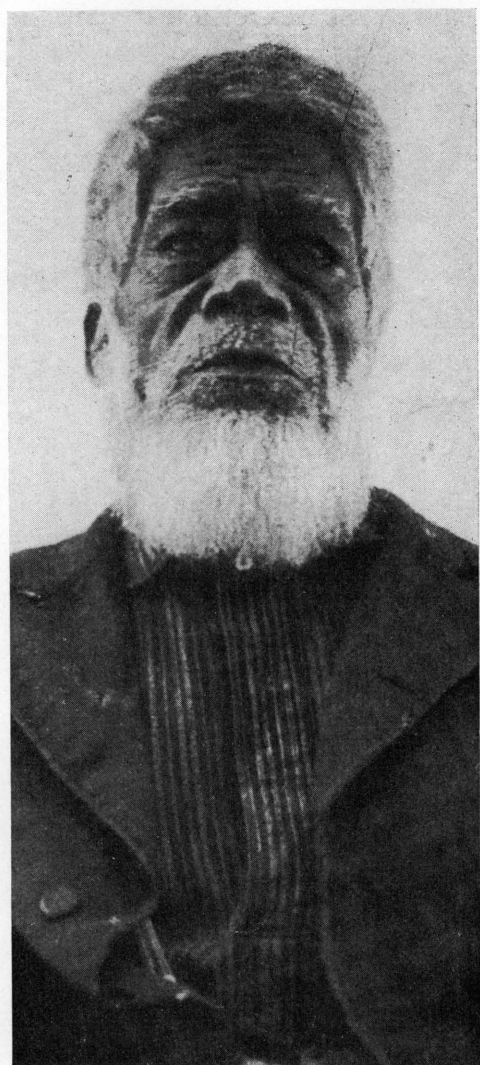
1853 mission, writing at a time of life when the past perhaps was more vivid than the present:

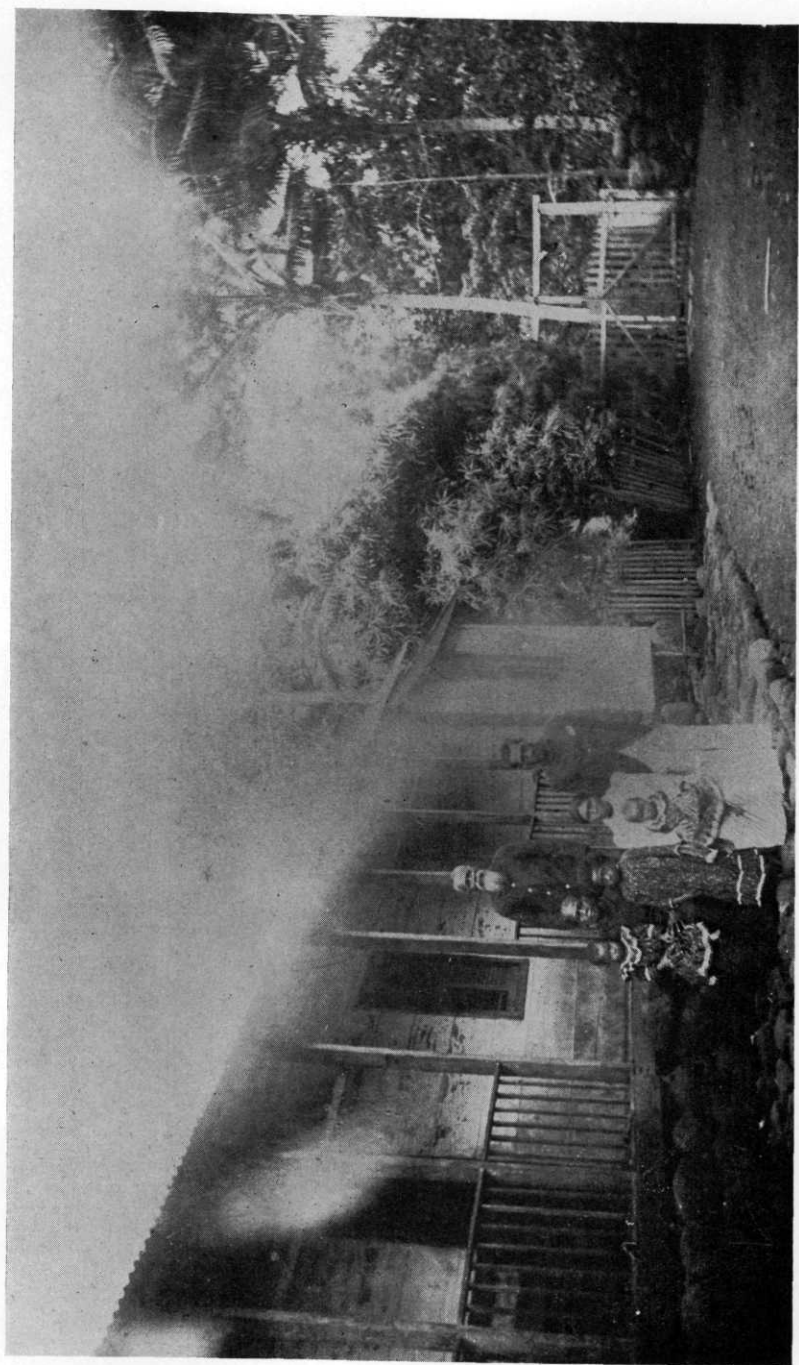
*Ma ka makahiki 1852 he kua kuloko ma ke kahawai o Oomoa, Fatuiva, Matuunui me kona poe ma ka aoao makai, a o Teiitheitope me kona poe mauka. He nui na kuma o ka lakou mau kua kuioko, i ke kua ana me na pu me na laau me na pohaku. Ike iho ia o Mājuunui ua lawa ole lakou i na pu me ka pauka a me ka poka, nolaila i kekahi po mahope mai, holo aku la o Matuunui me kona poe i Hanavave a o pau noia o ke kua kuloko. Ua hai mai na kamaaina ia makou, he wahi alii hoeueu kua, a o kona makemake e kua a make iloko o na kua a pau, aka hoi, wahi alii pio pinepine wale, aohe he kua e na lanakila ai. Noho o Matuunui me Hanavave a hala kekeha mau la. Kono hou iloko o Oomoa e kua hou, aole nae e hiki, ua paa oia i na kaikuahine a me na makua hoahanau. . . . E noho ana kekehi kanaka Hawaii o Puu me kekehi alii e aku kona noho ana. No ka pea ma Olowalu o Lahaina kona wahi hanau. Ma na moku okohola kona hiki ana ilaila, maia mau mahina, e inu nui ana na kanaka i ka rama wai nui hoowaaawaia. O Puu kekahi e inu ana a e ona ana, a e hele ana ma na kauhale e walaau ana ka waha e like me na (pupule?) a me na ulala. Hoopuku aku o ua Puu nei i kekahi mau olelo wahahee a hoopilipili ia Kaahumanu a me kana alii Kauikeaouli. . . . Maia mau la inu rama, ua ku aku la o Matuunui ia Puu, e lilo kane na kana kaikuahine na Vaitatu, a o ka pili mai noia he hunona. Maia wa no ua haawi aku ia o Matuunui he mau ninau ano nui oia keia. "He oioio anei na mea a makou i lohe ai, he nui ka honua, he nui na moku, he nui na lio, na bipi a he nui na hale waiho moni, a he nui na male maikai a he nui na kala, na pu, na poka, na pauda a he nui o na waa i ke keiki o ko kaikuahine ae o Kauikeaouli? . . . I ka mahina o Febuari 1853 ku mai la ma Oomoa ka moku kohola Amerika Tamalane. Capt. Storekely, no ka wai . . . he 10 paha la o ka noho ana malaila, hoomakaukau ke kapena no ka holo pololei i Kealakekua. Nonoi aku la o Matuunui i ke kapena e lawe ia lawa . . . e halawai me ka ohana o kana hunona, me ka uku i ka puua no ka holo ana. Ae no ke kapena."*⁶

In the year 1852 there was an internal war in the valley of Oomoa Fatuhiva; Matuunui and his people in the low-lying areas, and Tiiheitope and his people in the uplands. There were many reasons for the internal war, and the fighting was carried on with guns and sticks and rocks. Matuunui saw that he did not have enough guns, powder, nor bullets, so one evening later on, Matuunui and his people went off to Hanavave, ending the internal fighting. Some of the natives told us that some chiefs who stir up war want to fight to the death during all the wars, but others just take prisoners, not fighting on to a victory. Matuunui stayed at Hanavave some several days. Another war broke out at Oomoa, but he did not go, detained by women and older natives. There was staying there a native Hawaiian, Puu, with some of the chiefs. He came from the Olowalu area of Lahaina. He had arrived on a whaling ship. At that time there was much drinking amongst the natives of a rum concocted from coconut. Puu was drinking, and was drunk, and went around to various houses lying like a crazy person. Puu pronounced in lying words that he was related to Kaahumanu and to the alii Kauikeaouli. While this drinking of rum was going on, Matuunui established himself with Puu, and his daughter, Vaitatu, became Puu's wife, and so there was a son-in-law relationship. Later on Matuunui asked: "Is it really true what we have heard, that there is much land, many ships, many horses, and cattle, many stores of money, many fine houses, much money, many guns, much powder, and many canoes for the child of a female relative of Kauikeaouli?" In the month of February 1853, an American whaling ship, *Tamerlane*, Capt. Shockley? in command, anchored at Oomoa for water. It stayed ten days perhaps, the captain making ready to sail directly to Kealakekua. Matuunui asked the captain to take the two of them along so that he could meet the family of his son-in-law, paying with a pig for the passage. The captain agreed.

Samuel Kauwealoha

Source: Steinen, Karl von den. *Die Marquesaner und ihre Kunst*. (Berlin, 1925-28), Bd. 1, p. 37.





According to Kauwealoha, Puu's claims of relationship to the *ali'i* of Hawaii were only drunken boasts. Moreover, before reaching Hawaii, Puu and Matuunui realized that it might not seem fitting that they appear in Hawaii and ask bluntly for weapons and supplies. Accordingly, the two rascals conceived the idea of claiming that they had come to Hawaii to ask for missionaries.

The call was heeded by the brethren of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association. As Kauwealoha put it:

*Piha hauoli lakou i ka leo mai na moku o kai lili, "E hele mai e kokua ia makou."*⁸

They were all filled with happiness at the voice calling from far-off seas, "Come to help us."

A company of native Hawaiian ministers and deacons was formed, the reasoning being that Polynesian ministers might be better able to reach the Marquesan soul in a way that *haoles* could not. One does not have to read many pages of the Evangelical Association publications of this era to know that the *haole* ministry believed that there was a distinct entity called "the Polynesian mentality" and much effort was devoted to an analysis of this substance and how best it could be molded into Christianity.

Those chosen were James Kekela, L. Kuaihelani, J. W. Kaiwi, Samuel Kauwealoha along with the wives of all these brethren. Kekela and his wife Naomi left their small daughter in the care of Maria Ogden who conducted the Female Seminary School at Wailuku which Naomi had attended.⁹ Rev. B. W. Parker went along to see the mission established, and another *haole*, James Bicknell, also went, having agreed to pay his own expenses. Also in the party was James Kekela's elderly relative (who died before the group reached the Marquesas) along with Puu and Matuunui. And so,

*Ma ka la 16 o June 1853, komo iho la na hoa iloko o ka moku, me ka pule ana, and me na uwe ana i ka aina hanau, na waimake helelei, hoopulu ana i na papalina, ma ka hora eha o ke ahiahi, wehiia mai la ke kaula hooiui aina, a o ka holo ai la noia o ma kau o Tahiti ka ihu.*¹⁰

On June 16th, the brethren boarded the ship, praying, weeping for the home land, tears falling, wetting the cheeks, and at four o'clock in the afternoon, the lines holding us to land were let loose, and the bow of the ship set for Tahiti.

The group landed at Oomoa, Fatuhiva on August 25th, and the next day, a Sabbath, the first services were held, the spectacle received by the Marquesans with massive indifference. As Kauwealoha describes the scene:

*Akoakoa ae la na hoa misionari malalo ae o kekahi kumu laau hau nui kokoke ma ka wai. Malaila iho maka ai ka Sabati mua. Ua noho mai o Matuunui me Puu, a o na kamaaina, e holo ana i ka lawaia, e auau ana i ke kai, e puhi paka ana, e holo ana na keiki, e nana mai ana na wahine ma kahi mamao. . . . Akaaka wale mai la kahi kaula wahine.*¹¹

The missionary brethren assembled under a large hau tree near the water. There began the first Sabbath. Matuunui and Puu were there, and natives, sailing out to go

Rev. Hapuku, his wife, daughter, and her husband Ioane Kekela and their children at Hivaoa.

(Used with permission of Hawaiian Mission Children's Society)

fishing, swimming in the sea, smoking tobacco, children running about, the women looking at far-off places. A woman seer just laughed.

Within a week there was a confrontation between the newly arrived group and the French Catholics. A French man-of-war arrived carrying a priest and two native Hawaiian Catholic teachers, the Catholics also having decided on the wisdom of using native Hawaiians to convert the Marquesans. Kalua and Keahuku, the Catholic Hawaiians had been educated in Hawaii, had left Hawaii and settled at Taiohae, Nukuhiva, and had become teachers of the secular and the sacred for the Catholics. Now they had come to Fatuhiva to continue this work. There was an argument between the Catholics and the Protestants. The Catholics announced that since the Marquesas had become French possessions, the Catholic faith was to be enforced. Matuunui played the diplomat, according to Kauwealoha, and said:

*Aohe makou i ike a i lohe, ua lilo ko makou moku of Fatuhiva i ka Farani. Ua lohe makou o Nuuhiwa me Tahuata oia na moku i lilo. O na 'lii me na kanaka i makemake aku i ka pule pope, a hele, a o ka poe alii me na maka-ainana i hele . . . i ka makou pule, a pela e maikai ai kakou.*¹²

We did not know, had not heard that Fatuhiva had been taken over by the French. We heard that Nukuhiva and Tahuata were the islands that had been taken over. Let the chiefs and the natives who want to go to the Catholic church do so, and let the chiefs and the people who want to go to our church do so, and that way, everyone is well off.

Thus the conflict was smoothed over for the moment. It soon became clear however that Matuunui was no Marquesan counterpart of Opukahaia, and that he had little interest in spreading the gospel to his people.

The mission did not prosper. Converts were few, the tribal wars and human sacrifices continued. The sponsors of the mission in Hawaii, being aware of the meager successes of the mission, sent out Lowell Smith in 1855 to see what the situation was. Reasoning that what had worked in Hawaii to the benefit of the New England missionaries might prove just as successful in the Marquesas, Smith conducted a taboo-breaking ceremony. Kauwealoha remembered that:

*Ai na kane me na wahine, mea aole e ai pu na kane a me wahine, ua ai pu iho la kakou a pau, a mahope mai oia ai tapu i wawahi ia.*¹³

Men and women ate together. This had never been done by anyone before. We all ate together and after that the taboo was broken.

In addition to their spiritual responsibilities, the Kekelas soon became parents of Marquesan-born children. The matter of proper schooling for the children arose, and the Kekelas thought it best to send several of the children back to Hawaii to live with friends and relatives. Understandably, Kekela fretted over their welfare in Hawaii. Somehow, piano lessons had to be arranged for Rachael,¹⁴ and he wrote to Gulick, "Repair my watch and sell it to buy a dress for Susan."¹⁵ And what of Hunnewell? "Tell me frankly about Hunnewell. I am sad in hearing from Maria [Ogden] that he has gone secretly for passage on the whale ship and that he is opposed to Mr. Emerson."¹⁶

A problem developed in 1865 when James Bicknell wanted to take some of the Marquesans back to Hawaii to be educated and later to be returned to the

Marquesas as teachers. Kekela objected to the propriety of this fearing that it reflected unfavourably on the competence of the Hawaiian missionaries. Also, being familiar with mission history in general, Kekela was anxious to apply to the Marquesan undertaking some of the hard lessons learned from earlier missions to the Hawaiian Islands and to Micronesia. He wrote:

Ua lawe ia ka hana mai ko makou lima aku. E laweia keia poe ma Hawaii e aoia, a hoi mai, e kokou pu ma kakou. He lala okoa, aole no makou aku. Kainoa ua kaawale o Bicknell, ua haalele i ka hana ma ko Nuuhiva Paeaina. A heaha la keia kapili mai, me he mea la e hoole ana ia makou naaupo. Aole no he ike, aole no ma ka ike nui a hohonu ko makou hele ana mai. Aka, ma ke aloha wale no o ke Akua, aole nae makou pauaho, ia A. Natua, aole pono ke holo i Hawaii; o loaa ia ia ka waiwai nui, a kela i haaui mai na puolo manuahi. Eia hoi, o lilo koke i ka hooowalewale o ka hewa, nui ka poe lalau ma Hawaii na 'lii, na haole, kahi poe hoahanau ekalesia.

E nana oe ia Hopu, William Kanui, Kaumualii, ka poe holo pu mai me Binamu ma 1820. Haule koke lakou i ka lalau, e ninau oe ia kou makua, no ia poe he lohe ko'u, a pela i no. . . .

Eia Josepa Tiiekai he hoahanau ekalesia no, a ke laweia ilaila no kona mai e lapaau ia. . . . Ina e olo a hoi hou i Fatuiva, pomaikai, olioli. Aka, ina e make, pehea, e kaumaha kona poe ke lohe. A e ili mai paha kekahi hope ino maluna o makou, e like ma kela poe ma Elamano i pepehi ai i ka misionari kane me kana wahine aole o laua hewa. He pono hoolala ia Joseph Tiiekai, aka ia ka lapaau ana, make la, olelo ka naaupo, ia make ia ka laau lapaau. . . .

Mai make o Kauka Judd, no ka make o Kina'u, i na wa naaupo. Aia no kahi keiki a kapaia o Kailipalaki, ke kaikunane o Kekaaniau he inoa hoino kela ia Kauka Judd no ka palakiiia ana o ka ili o Kinau me ka hulu, e like ma ka palakiiia o ka hulu o ka lio.

O oe no hoi kekahi ma Bonape no kela 'lii ma Ronotiti, i ka wa o makou i haalele ia oukou ma 1852. Ua holo mai makou a Welineta Islands—hoi hou no na haole, a halawai pu me kamaaina o Matalanima. I mai lakou—ua make he alii ma Ronotiti, na kauka Gulick i hanai i ka laau. Aole pela kou manaoio.¹⁷

The work was taken out of our hands, these persons are to be taken to Hawaii to be educated and returned to assist us. A different branch, not of us. We thought that Bicknell was separated and had left the work in Nukuhiva. What is this joining together? It is as if there were denying of us, not good, no knowledge, the Hawaiians being deficient. It is true that we are ignorant. It is not for knowledge, we did not come here for great and deep knowledge, but only for love of God. We are not discouraged and abandoning the work. The white man is abandoning.

This is my chief reason for my refusing A. Natua's sailing to Hawaii, lest he gain much property and goods and return here, leave us, and topple over the idea of those who gave the free bundles, lest they enter soon into sin. Many persons went astray in Hawaii—the chiefs, white men, church members. Look at Hopu, William Kanui, Kaumualii, persons who sailed with Bingham in 1820. They soon fell into wandering. Ask your father about those persons. I've heard and it is true.

Here is Joseph Tiiekai, a church member, brought there on account of his illness to be medicated. If he lives and returns to Fatuhiva, it will be well. But if he dies, his people would be sad to hear of it and a sad end will be charged to us all, like the people at Elamano who killed the blameless missionary and his wife. It is well for Joseph Tiiekai to be made well, but if under the treatment, he should die, the ignorant would say he died of the medicine.

Dr. Judd would almost have died because of the death of Kinau. It was a time of ignorance. There was a child of Laanui called Kailipalaki, a brother of Kekaaniau, who reviled Dr. Judd because of brushing the skin of Kinau with a brush like the combing of a horse.

You were on Ponape for that chief at Ronotiti when we left you in 1852. We went to the Wellington Islands. The white men came and met with the old residents of

Matalanima. They said, "The chief died at Ronotiti. Dr. Gulick fed him poison." Not so, in my opinion.

Though stations were established on several of the Marquesan Islands and schools for Marquesan children founded, in general it can be said that the Marquesans remained unreceptive to the Gospel. Marquesans retained bitter memories of crimes inflicted against them by foreigners, and frequently were hostile to the missionaries. Kekela described several such incidents:

He kava kuloko ma Puamau nei ma Mei 9 ka hoomaka ana o ke kava a ma Augate 17 ka pau ana. O Mahleatete kua ia Kehau o Moea, oia na 'lii kava, a nui ka poe me kela a me keia a loko o keia kava kuloko. Ua hookoko keia mai na pilikia ia maua. Ua hiki mai kekahi kanaka ma ko maua hale nei, a ua hao aku i kekahi aahu o'u—a ua lilo loa aku he kanaka no ua ana launa mai ia makou, aka ina la kava, ua ano e a'e na maka.

I mahope mai ua pepehiia kuu mau holoholona e ka poe kava, 2 piula, hookahi hoku kipua a ua pau i ka aina e ka poe kava, a ua hele mai kekahi poe kava ma ka po e hoesa e puhi i ka maua hale kahiko, me ke ahi, a no ko'u ala me ke kiai i kela po i kakele ai. . . .

O S. Kauwealoha ma, ke noho nei laua ma Uapou, e hana i ka hana a ka Haku. Pakele no laua, aole i make pu me ko Uapou poe i ka mai puupuuilii "Smallpox". Hana ino na kamaaina i ka wai o ke kahawai me ko lakou mau welu i paumaele i ka lakou pilau, i imi ai Kauwealoha ma, a i hele ai hoi e auau i ka wai, alaila, hookahi ka make pu ana.

Penei ka olelo o ka kamaaina ma Uapou. "Ka! Ke make nei kakou na kamaaina o ka aina, a me na 'lii, mai o a o, aole make Kauwealoha ma, a e lilo ana paha ka aina no lakou; a imi kakou i mea e make ai, i hookahi ka make pu ana. . . . O keia mau mai i loa mau mai ia makou la, ea, na oukou no ia, ka pala, kaokao, hakahi, alaala, meeau, mai pake, a me na pilikia e ae o ke kino.

. . . a pela no ma ka aina ina paapaa la, aole ua, maloo ka aina, a haule wale na ulu, no ka misionari ka hewa. No nalo nahu, na makeka, na uku lele, na kanapi, na ua poe misionari nei keia i lawe mai nologo.

A pela no ma ka ia. Ua hele au i kekahi mau manawa me na kamaaina o ka aina i ka lawaia, a ina hele na kamaaina ole loa ka ia, i lakou i kekehi manawa, kuhikuhi lakou na'u no i anaana i na ia maloko o ke kai.¹⁸

An internal war was waged here at Puamau from May 9 to August 17. Maheate was opposed to Kehau of Moea, these being the leading chiefs with many warriors. This war brought trouble close to us. Some man came to our house and stole some of my clothes. Ordinarily he was friendly to me, but in time of war it was quite different.

Later my animals were killed by the warriors, two mules and a donkey were shot and eaten by them. Some warriors came at night to try to burn our old house, but because I was awake and on guard that night, it was saved.

S. Kauwealoha has been spared from smallpox, but some natives contaminated the water of the valley with their rags, soiled by their filth, that Kauwealoha might drink of it or go to bathe in it, and he would die with them. Thus spoke the natives of Uapou: "We, the old residents of the land and the chiefs here and there are dying, but Kauwealoha does not die, and perhaps they will possess the land. Let us seek means for their deaths, that we might die together. These sicknesses we have come from you, syphilis, social disease, scrofula, blight, leprosy, and other physical ills."

Likewise with the land, if it's very dry, no rain, parched, and the breadfruit falling down, the missionaries are at fault. The flies, colic, mosquitoes, fleas, centipedes—these were brought by the missionaries in their barrels from Oahu.

Likewise with the fish. I have gone fishing with old timers at times; and if we caught no fish they would point out that I had cast a spell upon the fish of the sea.

A persistent problem for the Hawaiian missionaries was the competition between Protestant and Catholic converts, the Catholics having the edge since they had the backing of the French administrative officials. Kekela perceived

the battle for souls in terms of a contrast between Protestant asceticism and Catholic worldliness:

Nui wale ka laua olelo hoino iwaina o kanaka no maua me neia. "O kela kanaka no Oahu mai, aole ia he misionari, he kanaka wale no, poe ilihune, aole lako in na lole, i na mokumanuwa, kela mea keia mea. O maua na misionari mai Farani, me ka aahu kahuna, lako i kela mea, keia mea, nui no mokumanuwa." Oia ka laua olelo kaena, ke hilinei nei laua mamuli o ka waiwai a me ka ikaika o ke kanaka. Nui no na mea hele mamuli o ka pope. Elike me ka nui mai o ka lole a me ka baka, pela ka pipili ana 'ku o kanaka, a i emi mai, pau loa lakou i ka haalele.¹⁹

They talk much slander about us saying, "That man from Oahu is not a missionary, but merely a man, a poor one, not supplied with clothes, or warships, etc. We are missionaries from France with vestments, supplied with everything, and many warships." This was their boastful speech. They trust in property and in human strength. Many adhere to Roman Catholicism but not steadily, and many backslide. Like the amount of clothing and tobacco, so is their adherence. If it is all gone, they will all desert.

In the following passage, it would seem that the Oahu *haole* brethren knew what they were about when they assumed that Hawaiians would be more effective than *haoles* in interpreting Christianity to the Marquesans. Kekela was aware of similarities between the Polynesian *kapu* and Christian practices.

Ma ka malama ana i ka la Sabati kahaha loa na kamaaina, hiki mai la ka la Sabati, holo ka pope me kana poe haumana i ka lawaia ma ka waapa, aole Sabati i koe. Olelo na kamaaina "Olelo na pope he la kapu keia no Iohova, auhea ke kapu, aia ke hele la i ka lawaia, hoo ka lakou ahi, he pule wahahee kela. Aole like me kau pule, he kapu maoli no ia, waihao na hana apau loa, noho malie."²⁰

In observing the Sabbath, the old timers are such surprised, for when this day comes, the priest and his followers go fishing in a boat and there is no more Sabbath. Old-timers say, "The Roman Catholic priests say this is a day sacred to Jehovah. Where is the taboo in going fishing, lighting fires? This is a false religion unlike your religion, which is a real taboo, setting aside all work and living quietly."

In response to the difficulties suffered by the Hawaiian missionaries, reinforcements, all native Hawaiians, were sent by the Hawaiian Evangelical Society until 1873, but by 1890 only three missionary families, the Kekelas, the Kauwealohas and the Hapukus, were left to carry on the mission.²¹ Of the 1853 group, Lota Kuaihelani and his second wife (his first wife having died in 1856) gave up on the savage people of Hanavave, Fatuhiva and asked to come home to Hawaii. I. W. Kaiwi suffered periods of insanity and was returned to Hawaii.²² The wives of two of the missionaries ran off with other men and their husbands asked to be withdrawn from their stations. Paulo Kapohaku, who came in 1858 was blinded by a fire deliberately set by a Marquesan and returned to Hawaii in 1861 as a martyred hero.²³

By 1890 the calls of the *Morning Star* missionary ships had ceased altogether, and though Kekela, Kauwealoha and Hapuku continued to receive their annual salaries of \$200, the Hawaiian Evangelical Association devoted most of its resources to support of the more promising Micronesian mission. The Hawaiian missionaries were old and discouraged.

Kauwealoha and Kekela were lifelong friends, like Jonathan and David, said Kekela,²⁴ the friendship dating from their student days at Lahainaluna.

But relations between Hapuku and Kekela were strained and in 1893 a serious problem developed.

Hapuku's daughter Emele, married to one of Kekela's sons, became ill, and there being no proper doctor available the Hapukus took Emele to a Marquesan "witch-doctor", so termed by the Honolulu brethren. The witch doctor said that Emele's body was haunted by a Marquesan spirit and carried out the appropriate rites. In return for this service the Hapukus gave the witch doctor a horse. Emele recovered. Kekela was outraged at this resorting to heathenish practices and wrote to the Hawaiian Board of the Evangelical Association expressing his disapproval and asking for advice. The Board told Kekela that he and Kauwealoha should form an investigating committee, and this was done.²⁵ Confronted with his sin, Hapuku did not repent; and his wife missing the point completely asked

Pehea la, ua make ka'u kaikamahine? He mea uku wale no ka lio a'u, o ke ola o kuu kaikamahine he mea nui. Noi mai ke daimonio e haawi aku ka lio, ola o Emele au'a make la, nolaila haawai au i ka lio no ka daimonio."²⁶

So what! Should my daughter die? The horse is of little importance. The life of my daughter is what matters. The witch-doctor asked to be given the horse, and then Emele would live, and if not, she would die, so I gave the horse to the witch-doctor.

The upshot of the affair was that Hapuku was dismissed from the Board for complicity in heathenish practices and received no salary from 1894 until 1896. Hapuku, however, remained in the Marquesas and continued his work. He was reinstated in 1897.²⁷

The incident is an echo of the *kahuna* controversy current in Hawaii at that time. Kamehameha V, in 1868, had outraged the missionaries by licensing the medical *kahunas*,²⁸ as had Kalakaua who also "summoned the *kahuna* . . . and all that was dark in the Hawaiian character."²⁹ The evil spread, and native Hawaiian ministers were accused of reverting to their savage heritage and utilizing the services of the medical *kahunas*. "All our native pastors find themselves hard pressed between sense of duty and terrors of the deacons and church members, as well as the fears of their wives . . . lest the evil gods destroy them and their children," said *The Friend*.³⁰ "Not less than three native pastors have died in as many years while submitting themselves to the treatment of the *kahunas*. Many times it is the wife's fault."³¹ The church leader, O. P. Emerson, believed that the native ministry had been entrusted with too much power too soon and cited these damaging statistics: In 1863 there was a church membership of 19,725 in the care of 16 American missionaries and 4 native helpers. But the 57 churches in 1895 were in the charge of native ministers almost wholly, and church membership had dropped to 4,784.³²

The action taken against Hapuku seems harsh in view of his forty years of missionary service far from his homeland. There is no evidence that Hapuku died as less than an ardent Christian. His daughter reported his death-bed words to Emerson:

E like me kana hai ana mai ia makou i ka holo elua o ka po, ia ka i ana mai ua pau ko'u aie i ke koko mana o Iesu, ke hele nei au i mua ona, me ka hala ole, ua maikai ko'u alani e hele ai, no oukou ke aie i koe.³³

As he told us at two at night, he was satisfied that his debt to the sacred blood of Jesus was ended. "I go before him without sin. I have walked the path of righteousness. The debt remains for you."

Kekela's letters in the last years of the mission are filled with despair over the spiritual and physical ills of the Marquesans:

Ke hoi hope nei ka aina Nuuhiva ma ka lakou mau hana omua ka hana rama, inu a ona, ke kakau ili, na hana lealea o ka wa kahiko, ka hula, ua hoopaapaa no ka aina.³⁴

O ke ai opiuma a o ka inu rama na mea ino loa ma ka Paeaina Nuuhiva nei. He nui no hoi na mea i loohia ia ka mai pake . . . a he nui no ka poe e make ana ilaila, a he mau mai e ae no hoi e loa i na kamaaina. . . . Aole nae hanau nui na wahine hou i na keiki.³⁵

Nukuhiva has regressed to its former ways, making rum, drunkenness, tattooing, the pleasure seeking of the old days, dancing, and fighting over land.

Opium eating and drinking rum are widespread evils on the island. Many have fallen victim to leprosy. Many have died and there are other diseases which afflict the natives. Not many children are being born.

Troubles persisted between the Protestants and the French Catholic officials. In 1873 a Catholic priest, Dominique Fournon, reported officially to the Hawaiian Board that Kekela had illegally cut cotton belonging to the French and for the offense had been fined \$200, a sizable penalty when it is remembered that the sum was equal to Kekela's annual salary. Fournon complained that by rights Kekela should have been sent to jail.³⁶ Understandably, Kekela had been reluctant to report the incident to the Board, and when confronted, said that he had not been tried properly, that the case had been handled in French, and that perhaps his words had not been properly translated. Kekela apologized³⁷ and at length the affair blew over.

Kekela refused to be cowed by the French and when some of the French officials tried to insist that the schools be controlled by priests, Kekela asserted himself with considerable spunk, and won his point.

Mamua aku o ko oukou pae mai ma Nuuhiva, ua palapala mai penei: Na ka pope ka oihana ao kula hana ma Puamau, aole na Kekela. . . . Aka, hoole au i ka pono o ia mea, aole pela ke kanawai Farani. Aia ia ka makua ka mana maluna o kana keiki ma kahi ana i makemake ai ma ke kula kakolika, hele ke keiki ilaila, ma ke kula pelotetane, a hele ke keiki malaila. Ua hoka nui na pope ma ia mea.³⁸

Before our arrival at Nukuhiva, it was decreed that school teaching would be conducted by the papists at Puamau, not by Kekela. But I disputed the legality of this matter. It was not according to French law. The parent has control over the child. If he wants a Catholic school, the child goes there, if a Protestant, the child goes there. The papists were most disappointed in this matter.

Kekela kept up with Hawaiian affairs by reading *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*. He passed judgment on the last of the Hawaiian monarchs thusly:

Nani ko ke Akua lokomaiikai i ka hoopakele ana i ka Paeaina Hawaii mai na lima o ka poe kipi ma o Liliuokalani ke Alii puni koko o Ianuari 1895 nei. He mau Alii pono ole laua Kalakaua me Liliuokalani. He mau Alii makemake i ka mea ino. A ua pono no ke Akua hoopau ana ia laua mai ka noho Alii mai o Hawaii. Ua hiki mai ka manawa kupono e noho

*ai ka naauao maluna o ka mea naauao. He kieke loa ka naauao maluna o ka mea naauao. Maikai ke hui aku ka Paeaina Hawaii me ke aupuni Amerika. Ua malu—pela no ko'u mana'o.*³⁹

It was God's blessing that the Hawaiian islands were rescued from the hands of Queen Liliuokalani's rebels, the ones overcome by bloodshed in January 1895. Kalakaua and Liliuokalani were immoral. They sought after wickedness and it was right that God brought an end to the reign of the alii in Hawaii. The rightful time has come for wisdom to reign over ignorance. Raise high wisdom over ignorance. The joining of the Hawaiian islands with the government of America is good. There is peace—that is my opinion.

Having witnessed a Bastille Day celebration in Papeete in 1898, Kekela was convinced that it was fortunate that Hawaii had come into American rather than French possession.

He kulaia nui ko ke aupuni farani ma Papeete nei ma 14 of Julai i like me ko Amerika ma 4 of Julai. He mau hana hoohauoli ko Amerika, hai olelo, hoomaikai i ke Akua, na hana hooikaika kino a pela aku.

*He poe punilealea na lahui farani, na hana o ka wa kahiko, hula o ko Tahiti Paeaina, ko Poomutu, Rurutu, Tubuai, Atiu, a huiapu me na himeni hoolea i ke Akua. A he like ia mau hana apau me hana o ka poe (kukae arioli?). He mea ehaeha i ko kakou mau maka ke nana 'ku, no ka mea, ma ia la, e ae ia na mea waiona i kau ma na papa kaukau—bia, saida, waina, viseke, e awili pu ia me na wai ona. He nui wale na hale lilii kuai waiona.*⁴⁰

The French government is celebrating the 14th of July in Papeete, as America does on the 4th of July. What Americans do to celebrate is to give speeches, worship God, do things to strengthen the body, and so on.

The French are pleasure lovers, acting as in the old days. The dances of Tahiti, Tuamotu, Rurutu, Tubuai, and Atiu mingle with joyous hymns to God. What is done is like what the (filthy arioli?) did. It is a very painful thing for our eyes to behold, because all kinds of liquor are allowed on the tables on this day—beer, soda, wine, whisky. There are many small establishments selling liquor.

In 1896 the Alexander brothers, James and Samuel, the children of Kekela's teacher at Lahainaluna, came to the Marquesas for a visit. Looking at Kekela's large brood, ten children, more than twenty grandchildren, and three or four great-grandchildren, the Alexanders urged Kekela to bring the children to Hawaii for proper educations just as the American missionary children in Hawaii were sent to the United States for their educations.⁴¹ Kekela agreed, but it was not until 1899 that he could arrange for a ship for his family's transportation. Probably Kekela meant to return and was comforted somewhat that he had found a French Protestant minister, Paul Vernier, to come to the Marquesas to carry on the work during Kekela's absence. Vernier's mission, however, was not of long duration. Vernier became discouraged and wrote to Hawaii asking for Kekela to return. There had been many defections in the parish, Vernier reported, and Kekela could set things right.⁴² But old age and ill health prevented Kekela's return.

In 1904 not long before Kekela's death, the *Hawaiian Gazette* published a sad account, "Rev. Mr. Kekela locked in a prison cell". Senile crotchettiness, or perhaps a family dispute seem best to explain what happened. Kekela's brother-in-law brought him to the jail house demanding that he be locked up and preferring charges of insanity. The relative claimed that Kekela became very angry if he were not given money to ride about in hacks. A guard tried

to take away the famous gold watch, but Kekela said dramatically, "If I lose that, I die!" How pitiful, this overnight stay, commented the *Gazette*.⁴³

Kekela died later in 1904. He lies buried in Kawaiahao churchyard a few steps from where his gold watch and letters are kept at the Mission House.

Some of the Kekela children stayed in the Marquesas and the name crops up not uncommonly in accounts of travelers to the Marquesas. One Kekela son, a carpenter, built the house where Paul Gauguin died.⁴⁴

Willowdean Handy reported that the Kekela descendants continued to marry one another or outsiders, rather than Marquesans, thus preserving an island of Protestant/Hawaiian/Tahitian influence in a rising tide of Catholic/Marquesan/French culture.⁴⁵ Of Kekela's son Samuel, Handy observed that he "knew nothing of old native customs, was versed in the Bible, but seemed to have closed his eyes and deafened his ears to the words of his neighbors, insulated in the spirit of aloha, slow and dim witted".⁴⁶

Kauwealoha died in the Marquesas in 1909, the last of the Hawaiian brethren. Once Kauwealoha said, "I was born in a malo, I was baptised in a malo and I can return to my malo and die in a malo, but I cannot abandon the people who I love more than my earthly kindred of my native land."⁴⁷ This is a fitting epitaph for the man.

NOTES

¹ Albertine Loomis, *To all People* (Honolulu, 1970).

² The late Rev. Henry Judd completed the translations of a number of the missionary letters in the 1950's. When quoted herein, his translations have been acknowledged. Other translations are those of this author. Some liberties have been taken in the transcription of the punctuation of the original Hawaiian.

³ Robert Louis Stevenson, *In the South Seas* (Honolulu, 1971), pp. 87-88.

⁴ For a study of the London Missionary Society mission to the Marquesas based on the records of the LMS, see J. E. Doroszkow, *The London Missionary Society and the Marquesas Islands* (unpublished paper, University of Hawaii microfilm 4469).

⁵ Mary C. Alexander, *Notes on William Patterson Alexander in Kentucky, the Marquesas*, (Honolulu, 1934), pp. 138-175.

⁶ Kauwealoha to O. P. Emerson, Feb. 18, 1891. HMCS.

⁷ Spelling of the ship's name and that of her captain taken from Marine Journal of *The Friend*, April 1853, p. 32.

⁸ Kauwealoha to O. P. Emerson, Feb. 18, 1891. HMCS.

⁹ Alexander, p. 357.

¹⁰ Kauwealoha to O. P. Emerson, Feb. 18, 1891. HMCS.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Kekela to James M. Alexander, March 7, 1876. HMCS. Translation by Judd.

- ¹⁵ Kekela to L. H. Gulick, August 11, 1865. HMCS. Translation by Judd.
- ¹⁶ Kekela to L. H. Gulick, April 10, 1869. HMCS. Translation by Judd.
- ¹⁷ Kekela to L. H. Gulick, March 28, 1865. HMCS. Translated by Judd.
- ¹⁸ Kekela to L. H. Gulick, Jan. 16, 1865. HMCS. Translated by Judd.
- ¹⁹ Kekela to E. W. Clark, Feb. 2, 1858, Translated by Judd.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*
- ²¹ *Missionary Album* (Honolulu 1837) p. 194.
- ²² Alexander, p. 470-471.
- ²³ Loomis, p. 160.
- ²⁴ Kekela to O. P. Emerson, June 31, 1898, HMCS.
- ²⁵ Kekela to O. P. Emerson, Oct. 19, 1893, HMCS.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*
- ²⁷ Reports of salaries of missionaries taken from *Annual Reports* of Hawaiian Evangelical Association, 1893-1897.
- ²⁸ Hawaii (Kingdom) Laws, statutes, etc. Session laws, 1868, pp. 22-23. The missionary reaction is exemplified by O. P. Emerson. *Address to the Hawaiian Mission Children's Society*, 1895, HMCS.
- ²⁹ O. P. Emerson. *Address to the Hawaiian Mission Children's Society*, 1895, HMCS.
- ³⁰ *The Friend*, July 1892, pp. 59-60.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 55.
- ³² O. P. Emerson. *Address to the Hawaiian Mission Children's Society*, 1895. HMCS.
- ³³ Emele Kekela to O. P. Emerson, June 17, 1901. HMCS.
- ³⁴ Kekela to O. P. Emerson, Jan. 31, 1892. HMCS.
- ³⁵ Kekela to O. P. Emerson, Oct. 19, 1893. HMCS.
- ³⁶ Dominique Fournon to Hawaiian Board, Feb. 17, 1873. HMCS.
- ³⁷ Kekela to Hawaiian Board, letter undated but from context, 1897. HMCS.
- ³⁸ Kekela to James M. Alexander, Jan. 15, 1897. HMCS.
- ³⁹ Kekela to C. M. Hyde, May 15, 1895. HMCS.
- ⁴⁰ Kekela to O. P. Emerson, June (*sic.*, *i.e.*, July?) 3, 1898. HMCS.
- ⁴¹ Kekela to H. H. Parker and O. P. Emerson, Nov. 5, 1896. HMCS.
- ⁴² *The Friend*, Nov. 1899, p. 91.
- ⁴³ *Hawaiian Gazette*, Jan. 22, 1904.
- ⁴⁴ Bengt Danielsson, *Gauguin in the South Seas* (Garden City, 1966), p. 265.
- ⁴⁵ Willowdean Handy, *Forever the Land of Men* (New York, 1965), p. 40.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 191.
- ⁴⁷ *The Friend*, June 1860. Supplement, p. 4.